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# INPORTNEWS

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OMB

## Planning dispute

ALLAN BENNER  
 InPort News Staff

It really comes down to whose rezoning application it was in the first place. There was preliminary Ontario Municipal Board hearing in Port Colborne city council chambers last week that centres around Nyon Oil's plans to build a tank and wind farm on 300 hectares between Hwy. 140 and the Welland Canal.

■ **DONATIONS:** Local church collects boxes of items bound for Afghanistan

## Gathering the troops

MAGGIE RIOPELLE  
 Tribune Staff

PORT COLBORNE — To help Canadian troops overseas enjoy the comforts of home, St. John Bosco Church has recently gathered up donations from the community.

On Saturday, at Royal Canadian Legion Branch 56 in Port Colborne, Melissa Murdoch accepted donations from the church's Catholic Women's League who encouraged the parishioners to donate to the cause.

The church was able to collect 10 boxes of donations and two bags full of things such as food, toiletries, games and Tim Hortons products.

Murdoch started collecting donations after her best friend's husband was sent to Afghanistan.

Master Cpl. Joel Daoust was sent overseas, leaving his wife Janet and two sons Jake and Joshua in Port Colborne. Murdoch said her intention, initially, was to just send a care package to her friend's husband.

"It started out as just sending one box to (Jake and Josh)'s dad. Then it was one box a week," she said.

"Then other people wanted to help so I couldn't say no."

See **SOLDIERS** | Page 7



MAGGIE RIOPELLE Staff Photo

Care packages for troops in Afghanistan have been donated by St. John Bosco Church. From left, St. John Bosco Catholic Women's League president Toni Ferrara, Melissa Murdoch and her daughter August, and CWL vice-president Angie Shaw. Murdoch started collecting care packages for troops for her friend's husband, the father of, from left in back, Joshua and Jake Daoust. The project has blossomed since then.

See Inside: **PUPP'S**  
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# upfront

■ OMB

## City lawyer questions jurisdiction in Nyon Oil appeal

FROM PAGE 1

Joseph Sniezek, who chaired the meeting, said the board has to decide if the City of Port Colborne acted independently when it applied for zoning changes and official plan amendments to allow Nyon Oil to build a tank farm on the city's rural east side — or if the city acted as an agent for the company. Sniezek heard arguments from Nyon lawyer James Ayres and Bruce Engell representing the city during the daylong hearing to decide if Nyon's OMB appeal will proceed. The company is appealing the city's recent decision to scrap the project it had been working on for most of the past decade.

Ayres referred to affidavits by city staff members and elected officials, letters between company and city staff representatives, city reports and other documentation filed over the past eight years to support his argument that the city was acting as an agent for the company when it filed applications with Niagara Region for zoning and official plan amendments in 2005.

He told Sniezek that Nyon's appeals "are valid," and the company "participated in all aspects of the planning application approval process as an applicant."

Engell, however, referred to the applications themselves to support his argument that the city acted independently when making those applications. The city, he pointed out, is clearly indicated as the sole applicant in all of the documentation submitted to the region four years ago.

The city lawyer questioned whether the OMB has jurisdiction in hearing an appeal by Nyon Oil over a piece of property between Hwy. 140 and the Welland Canal. Engell told Sniezek that it was the city, not Nyon Oil, who made the applications for zoning changes on Feb. 15, 2005 to allow the company to develop 300 hectares of property. If an applicant for zoning changes withdraws those changes, Engell questioned why the OMB would be involved.

As such, he said the OMB may not have jurisdiction in the case at all.

"The evidence ... shows the applicant withdrew the application. Where that leaves the board with respect to jurisdiction, I submit you don't have any in that aspect

because the applicant withdrew," Engell said during a preliminary hearing Nov. 18 to determine if an OMB appeal recently filed by Nyon Oil would proceed.

But Ayres objected. He said if the city was planning to raise the question of jurisdiction during the hearing, Nyon should have been informed. And if the OMB itself had any doubts about whether or not it had jurisdiction in the matter, then it should have informed Nyon about those doubts.

The fact that the preliminary hearing was being held, Ayres added, clearly demonstrates that the OMB has accepted jurisdiction in the issue.

Citing documentation dating back to the start of the decade, Ayres argued Nyon was the applicant and the city was acting as its agent when it made the applications for zoning changes.

"Nyon fully participated in the application process. Nyon provided information and participated in the open house," and the company "attended all of the meeting with the city," Ayres said.

"We're saying, in any event, Nyon is the person who requested" the amendments.

"Throughout the application process Nyon was, and was treated by the city as the proponent of the applications."

For that reason, he said Nyon was the applicant "and therefore has a statutory right to appeal."

Ayres described the relationship between the city and Nyon as "similar to that of a public-private partnership."

He cited letters between then city chief administrative officer Robert Coterrell and the company as evidence, which stated that the letter itself would be considered acceptance of agreements between the parties.

"I submit to you that if the board accepts the arguments of the city, the purposes of the appeal provisions of the planning act would be rendered meaningless, as there would be no one with any right to appeal the city's decisions to the board," Ayres said.

"As a result of the foregoing, the board should give the appeal provisions of the planning act a broader interpretation so that it doesn't unnecessarily deprive persons of their rights."

Ayres said the procedure the city followed when it

scrapped its applications for zoning changes is in itself grounds for appeal.

"The zoning bylaw was dealt with unjustly," he said.

"There was no notice that it would be considered at the special council meeting ... it wasn't advertised, public notice wasn't given that it would be considered at the special council meeting, and then all of the sudden following the special council meeting there's a notice of refusal of the zoning bylaw. I think that in itself would warrant the board to have jurisdiction over the matter and to have an appeal."

While the city conceded that Nyon was the proponent of the appeal and the developer, Engell said the city was the sole applicant for the zoning changes in question.

Engell said there are really only two relevant documents — the application for zoning changes and for official plan amendments the city made to the region in 2005, and the agreement of purchase and sale a year later. The application itself, Engell said, made no mention of Nyon. The city, as a public body, was also not required to pay for the zoning changes and amendments, he added.

"At the time, sir, there were no binding agreements between the two parties," he told Sniezek.

The "only binding agreement between" was made 11 months after the application was submitted, and that was the agreement of purchase and sale for the land. Other documentation was merely discussion and intent, "but at that point there were signatures."

That agreement, in which Nyon would purchase the property from the city for \$1,100 an acre, was contingent on many stipulations including that zoning changes would be in place before Nyon took possession of the property, and that the company would not pay the city for the property or any of the consultant fees or studies until after it took possession. The city has spent more than \$800,000 on the failed project so far.

The OMB gave no indication of when the decision would be made, although Sniezek asked for a box to cart away all the documentation he would need to sift through in the weeks ahead to make his decision.

"It won't fit in my briefcase," he said.

[abenner@wellandtribune.ca](mailto:abenner@wellandtribune.ca)

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# portraits

## Gators' gridiron glory

The Lakeshore Catholic Gators are having another successful football season. The senior squad beat St. Marcellinus of Mississauga 24-17 in the Golden Horseshoe Bowl semifinals last week at Ivor Wynne Stadium in Hamilton and advanced to the all-Ontario championship game, which was played on Wednesday. As of press time, the score wasn't available.

Last year, the Gators defeated Burlington's Notre Dame to capture their second provincial title in team history.



**BERNIE PUCHALSKI**  
Sun Media



Staff and Sun Media Photos

**SMITHVILLE** — Prior to Thursday's Varsity 2 high school football championship game, Randy Toepp told his son about the last time Port Colborne won a title.

Seventeen years later, the Port Colborne Blue Bears were celebrating a near identical end to the season following a 7-0 victory over the previously unbeaten South Lincoln Bears.

"It was the exact same season," said Blue Bears running back Josh Toepp, who had 15 carries for 40 yards. "They lost the first two games and then they went undefeated."

"And on a day exactly like this, they won it in the rain."

The 17-year-old had an unexpected response to his father's tale.

"It gave me more of a will to win, rather than trying to impress my dad," he said. "But it's the team, it's not about destiny."

But Port Colborne surely was a team of destiny after opening the season with two losses and then going 7-0 the rest of the way to claim the championship.

"Everyone had their doubts, but the coach kept us pumped up and taught us the key things," Toepp said.

He's (Chris Cairns) the best coach I've ever had and the best person I will ever know."

Cairns, in an emotional post-game address to his team, summed up the victory.

"The Bears have the heart to stay in the game and today was a perfect example that if you never say die, that if you work as hard as you can, you can achieve what you want."

Cairns said to a joyous group of Blue Bears.

For South Lincoln, there was no joy at the West Lincoln Leisuresplex.

Left: Port High quarterback Eric Pipher is tackled by a South Lincoln player during the Varsity 2 Division high school football final last week. Middle: Jake Fraser of the Lakeshore Catholic Gators dives in an attempt to stop a member of the St. Marcellinus Spirit during the Golden Horseshoe Bowl semifinals. Right: P4 – Nicky Boulard of the Lakeshore Catholic Gators runs with the ball. Bottom: The Lakeshore Catholic Gators celebrate their 24-17 win in the Golden Horseshoe Bowl semifinals.



# INPORT NEWS

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## ourview

### Canadian workers starved for higher paying jobs

The record surge in visits to the country's food banks during the worst recession in decades masks the broader reality of deprivation in Canada.

Yes, it's shocking that there was an 18% jump in the number of people using food banks in March — the largest year-over-year increase on record.

Of the 800,000 people who needed extra help to put food on the table, almost 10% used a food bank for the first time, according to survey results released by officials yesterday.

Even once-swaggering Alberta has fallen on hard times, experiencing a whopping 61% increase in food bank usage between March 2006 and March 2009, the largest jump in the country.

Such is the inevitable consequence of a downturn in a province whose economy depends on the health of the oil patch. (Nova Scotia, Ontario and Manitoba also experienced a dramatic rise in the number of food bank clients.)

Tellingly, 19% of those in households that resort to food banks each month are employed, or were until just recently. Canada's secret shame is that the extent of poverty in this wealthy country is much larger than people imagine.

Sure, only 5% of Canadian workers earn minimum wage, but 21% of them toiled for less than \$12 an hour last year. That's three million Canadians stuck in low-wage jobs.

All across the country, people are struggling to pay the bills, feed the kids and keep a roof over their heads on a salary of less than \$25,000 a year. Try doing that month after month without dipping into the food bank. As Statistics Canada pointed out earlier this year, Canada has one of the highest proportions of low-paid workers in the industrialized world.

The U.S. has similarly high rates of low-wage workers. In contrast, a much smaller proportion of employees in many European countries are poorly paid. Depending on where you stand on the ideological spectrum, some might argue that Canada's laissez-faire approach to the economy is preferable to the more socialist systems in Europe because our unemployment rates are lower.

Nevertheless, Canada isn't as compassionate as it pretends to be. Just ask the working poor lined up at our food banks.

mindy.alex@sunmedia.ca

## HOLIDAY EVENT: Lioness prepare for breakfast with Santa, Dec. 5



Submitted Photo

The Port Colborne Lioness are gearing up for their 8th annual breakfast with Santa Saturday, Dec. 5 at the Lions Hall, 49 Chippawa Rd. Tickets are \$6 for the pancake and sausage breakfast with beverages and each child will receive a surprise from Santa. Seatings will be held at 9 and 10:30 a.m. and tickets can be purchased at Tucks Jewellers, 10 Clarence St. or by calling 905-899-3544.

## readers'views

### Every Kid thanks its supporters

On behalf of Every Kid in Our Community Port Colborne-Wainfleet, a coalition of more than 30 youth-serving organizations who network and collaborate to build positive asset development opportunities for youth in our community, I would like to thank our many supporters and volunteers who helped make our Summer Neighbourhood Barbecue Series a great success.

There were donations from Port Colborne Rotary Club, Powerhouse Project, Royal LePage, Shoppers Drug Mart, Port Colborne-Wainfleet Healthy Lifestyles Coalition, Safe Communities Port Colborne, Bedawey's Foods, and Niagara Regional Police — Port Colborne detachment. This helped us provide free food, activities and prizes for more than 600 residents at our four events held from June to September at Community Living Port Colborne-Wainfleet, H.H.

Knoll Park, Lion's Field and Victoria Park/Port Cares' Reach Out Centre.

Numerous volunteers from our partner organizations helped with promotion, cooking, game supervision, public opinion surveys and more. A special thanks to Uber youth members who came to every event and provided much needed assistance with set up, supervision and clean up.

We are planning to continue a variety of Every Kid neighbourhood events in December and throughout 2010, starting with a free neighbourhood tree decorating event at the Port Cares Reach Out Centre on Sunday, Dec. 6, from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.

Come join in the fun and help us show that every kid in our community counts.

— Lori Kleinsmith, Co-Chair, Every Kid in Our Community Port Colborne-Wainfleet

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## WORLD ISSUES

### Sex and violence in Africa



Gwynne Dyer

It was ostensibly about obscenity, but it was really about corruption and censorship. In the end, justice prevailed. Last Monday, a Zambian court found journalist Chansa Kabwela not guilty of "distributing obscene material with intent to corrupt public morals."

What obscene material? She had sent photographs of a woman giving birth in a hospital parking lot during a nurses' strike to senior government officials.

President Rupiah Banda called a press conference and declared the photographs pornographic. Soon after, Kabwela was arrested on obscenity charges. She faced a five-year jail sentence if she were found guilty, but Banda's real motive was probably the fact that the paper Kabwela works for, the *Post*, constantly accuses him of corruption.

The *Post* is probably right. Banda succeeded Levy Mwanawasa, a president of unquestioned integrity, after the latter died of a stroke last year. But unlike Mwanawasa, he has failed to pursue the previous president, Frederick Chiluba, a monumentally corrupt man who has been ordered to return \$55 million that he had stolen.

Banda has not tried to collect the \$55 million from Chiluba, and has instead opted for further action against him in Zambia's courts. An unsympathetic observer might wonder if some of Chiluba's stolen millions have bought Banda's complicity.

The *Post* wonders that out loud, so Banda went after its news editor, Chansa Kabwela.

The pictures Kabwela sent out were not pornographic. Rather, they were horrific: images of a woman in the midst of a breech birth, the baby's legs dangling out between her own while she lay inside her. It all happened in a hospital parking lot (she had already been turned away from two clinics), but nobody would help her because of the strike, and the baby suffocated.

Her appalled and furious relatives brought pictures of the scene to the *Post*. Kabwela did not publish them because they were so upsetting, but she sent copies to senior officials together with a letter urging them to intervene and settle the strike.

That's when Banda declared the images pornographic and had her arrested.

See Gwynne Dyer | Page 5

■ GWYNNE DYER

## The problems no-one wants to see

FROM PAGE 4

The courts are still imprisoned in Zambia, and in the end Kabweta were not guilty — but many of the witnesses were genuinely more shocked by photographs of a woman naked from the waist down than by the horror of what was actually happening. As one witness said: "We are all Zambians here. We all know this is not allowed in our culture."

The word you're looking for is "prudish," and it applies to a lot of African popular culture. Never mind what's actually happening. We don't want to hear about it, and we certainly don't want to see it. The Zambian elite has been devastated by HIV/Aids — the higher the social class, the worse the death rate — and yet nobody wants to talk about it, let alone about the links between sex, power and violence.

Go a thousand kilometres (miles) south to South Africa, and the gulf between appearances and reality is even wider. Last June, the country's Medical Research Council published a study about rape and HIV which reported that 28% of South African men admitted to having raped a woman or a girl. (A further 3% said that they had raped a man or boy.)

Almost half the rapists said they had raped more than one person, and three-quarters of them said they had carried out their first assault before the age of 20. They didn't use condoms and they were twice as likely to be HIV-positive (that is, rapists) as this is a national calamity that is killing more people than a middle-sized war.

and causing a huge amount of pain and grief. Yet few South Africans are even willing to talk about it.

Many Africans will be feeling defensive, but a lot of this reminds me of where I grew up. There was an amazing amount of low-level violence around, and there was also a huge amount of sexual predation. In the boys' school I went to, the male teachers molested the boarders on an industrial scale, although day-boys like me were fairly safe. And none of it was ever admitted or discussed in public.

Now I live in a culture where we are no longer prudish. Everything is out to the open, including trivialized, commercialized sex on a hundred channels. Around half of all marriages end in divorce, but guys, once persecuted and forced to hide, can also get married if they want to. You can still mugged in the street, but the level of casual violence — usually men beating up other women or kids — is sharply down. I bet that the real figures for rape are down a lot too.

I like the transformed culture I live in now a lot better — and it occurs to me that what we see in Africa now may be as transitional as what I grew up with in Newfoundland, in which case every moral and cultural change that socially conservative Africans see as a descent into darkness may actually be a move towards the light.

Gwynne Dyer's latest book, *Climate Wars*, was published recently in Canada by Random House and Vintage.

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**GATORS**

## South Lincoln coach tips his hat to Port Colborne team

FROM PAGE 3

"They stopped our run game," South Lincoln's Jeremy Muizelaar said. "

It was an even game, but they got a couple of good plays."

Muizelaar carried the ball 34 times for 103 yards and returned twice after being helped off the field with injuries.

"I was getting hurt," he said. "They're a really tough team, but I kept coming back because I wanted to win."

South Lincoln head coach Chris Freure tipped his hat to the bend-but-don't-break defence of Port Colborne.

"It was a great game," he said.

"Their team has stepped it up since we saw them in Week 2."

The Bears held Port Colborne to nine first downs and 122 net yards offence, but still lost.

"In the first quarter, we got beat on penalties and a couple of turnovers," Freure said.

"After that, it was a 0-0 ball game."

South Lincoln had a second-and-goal situation from Port Colborne's five-yard line on its first possession and didn't score, then came up empty on its first drive of the second quarter when it was second-and-goal on Port Colborne's six-yard line.

"We had a couple opportunities and went for field goals and didn't make them," Freure said.

Freure had little to be upset about in a game that featured dry conditions in the first half and steady rain the second.

"It was the defence we played all season," he said. "We slowed them down, we got the ball to our offence, but give credit to Port Colborne."

"They were really hungry for it and they won the game with their defence."

Cairns was quick to compliment South Lincoln's defence, but his was just a little bit better. The Blue Bears gave up more net yards and first downs than South Lincoln, but forced eight turnovers.

"They had a great defence and that's what got them to where they are. Our defence had to improve and it improved

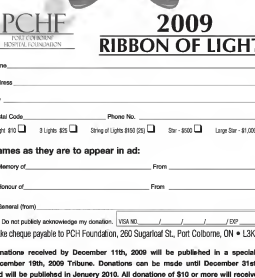
“It was the defence we played all season. We slowed them down, we got the ball to our offence, but give credit to Port Colborne.”

Chris Freyre, South Lincoln head coach

immensely from the beginning of the season.\*

The veteran coach felt a little bit fortunate with the triumph.

"We were lucky that before it rained today, we were able to get a pass off and score than one touchdown early."



# 2009

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## PORT COLBORNE

## ■ SOLDIERS

# Care packages collected to support troops

FROM PAGE 1

Murdock has a list of items to donate to the troops and now others wanting to help for the holiday season have pitched in.

Those care packages are sent to Daoust and then handed out to fellow troops.

"Last year I wanted to do this," said Angie Shaw, vice-president of the CWL at St. John Bosco. But at the time, she wasn't sure how to go about sending the items to the troops.

"When I saw Melissa doing it I brought it to the Catholic Women's League," she said.

Rather than collecting items for Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes, the league took this on as a special project for the holiday season. They also opened it up to the church as a whole and there was an overwhelming response.

People can continue to bring in donations, as Murdock sends items overseas as items come in.

Donations can be dropped off at Royal Canadian Legion Branch 56, on Clarence St. in Port Colborne.

For more information about what type of donations are needed or how to help with this project, e-mail Murdock at [melissa@northamericatraf-fic.com](mailto:melissa@northamericatraf-fic.com).

[mriopelle@wellandtribune.ca](mailto:mriopelle@wellandtribune.ca)

## ■ localbrief

## SLAMMING THE BRAKES ON UNSAFE VEHICLES

PORT COLBORNE — Twenty-one vehicles were taken off the road after being deemed unsafe by police last Saturday.

During the operation Road Worthy, Niagara Regional Police stopped 46 vehicles, of which 39 were escorted to an inspection site and examined.

Of the 39 vehicles inspected, 21 were

taken off the road immediately and had plates seized.

Another 14 vehicles were ordered to have repairs completed or face equipment charges. Officers also issued four provincial offence notices for a variety of Highway Traffic Act offences.

The NRP conducted these types of projects to that ensure drivers are not putting lives at risk.

With winter around the corner, police are reminding people to ensure vehicles are properly maintained.

— Tribune Staff

### ANNOUNCEMENT

## HAIR HUNTERS

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Did you know that by the time we turn 45 years old, almost half of us - well over 40% - will suffer the aches and pains of at least one joint problem caused by aging, injury, overuse or arthritis?

And if you're already feeling the pain, you know what I mean. Joint stiffness often limits your mobility and makes it difficult to perform many daily functions - because it's too painful. Yet, in spite of the pain and the problems caused by aching joints, many people are reluctant to take prescription drugs because of the well-documented risk of side effects.


Joint pain and arthritis is the number one cause of disability and affects millions of people. According to medical researchers, each year arthritis results in over 750,000 hospitalizations and over 36 million doctor visits in North America!

Now as the weather gets colder, can you feel the stiffness and the pain in your joints? Do you feel that that nagging pain in your neck, back, hip or knee or that stiffness in the morning? It may very well be the result of the one of the many common types of arthritis.

Surprisingly nearly two-thirds of people with arthritis are younger than 65 years of age. It is quite apparent that arthritis is not just an ailment exclusive to our older folks.

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## education

### HONOURING TOP STUDENTS

**PORT COLBORNE** — On Wednesday, Nov. 18, Port Colborne High School held its annual Honour Roll Banquet at the Port Colborne Golf and Country Club.

This year's theme of community was emulated throughout the banquet, with tables named after various schools. Port High's jazz ensemble set an ambience for guests.

Mayor Vance Badawey opened the evening, telling students to keep up the hard work. Guest speaker Mary Anne Feagan, who graduated from PCHS in 1983 and now works for the Port Cares Reach Out Centre, referred to the guru, John McKnight, saying a community is full of relationships, family, face to face interactions.

Dinner was followed by an awards presentation. A total of 83 students from the 2008/2009 student body earned an average of 90% or more in their classes. Each student received a certificate.

— Paige Thompson, For InPort News



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### ■ THIS SATURDAY: Winter Celebration house tours; designer craft show and sale

# Homes for the holidays

MAGGIO RIOPELLE  
InPort News Staff

**PORT COLBORNE** — Residents are sprucing up their homes for the holidays — and as many as 800 house guests.

Tickets are on sale for the Winter Celebration house tours, and designer craft show and sale.

For those not familiar with the second annual event, five homes in the community have been decorated by their owners. They will open their doors to give the community a chance to get some decorating ideas. The event is Saturday, Nov. 28, from noon to 6 p.m.

"Homeowners themselves decorate and I think it makes it a little more personal" than house tour homes that are decorated by professional designers, said event chair Gloria Simon. "It's something people can see and do themselves."

Tickets are \$15 and include a collectable poster of landmarks that no longer exist — this year the poster features a painting of Old Town Hall by Mary Prittie.

People won't know what homes have been decorated until they pick up maps, although organizers said all the homes are different than those featured last year.

The fundraiser will help the Guild Hall with its youth dances, movie nights and tutoring programs.

The 2008 tour benefited Port Colborne Hospital Foundation.

"Last year, we had fabulous response," she said.

"We raised more than \$12,000. We hope to raise at least as much as last year, if not more."

Open to even non ticket holders, the Guild Hall will become a winter wonderland with a designer craft show and sale. It will feature a variety of items by regional artists and a silent auction of decorated Christmas trees sponsored by local businesses, associations and Port Colborne's two high schools.

Lunch will be served up for a nominal fee. "People can also purchase tickets to vote for the best-in-show tree and it gives them a chance to win fabulous prizes," Simon said.

Door prizes include an escape package at the Stirling Inn and Spa including breakfast in bed and dinner for two; an overnight stay at the Niagara Falls Days Inn with dinner and a show at the Gregg Frewin Theatre; and golf at Lochness Links for a foursome, including a cart.

Last year 180 tickets were sold. Organizers hoping to sell all 300 tickets available this year.

"There's really nothing for youth to do in this community and the Guild Hall is on the right track but without funding it won't continue," Simon said. "We have to look after our youth, too. We think it's a positive thing."

"We also wanted to get the youth involved as well, so we got the two high schools involved with decorating trees."

Tickets for the house tours are available at Michelle's Place on West St., Guild Hall on Friday mornings by calling LakeBreeze at 905-834-1235 or by e-mailing wintercelebration2009@gmail.com.

mriopelle@wellandtribune.ca

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Daria Zmijewsky  
Director of Advertising

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■ **EVENT:** Grand Old Christmas Festival, Dec. 6

## Christmas tradition continues at museum



KAESHA FORAND Staff Photo

Port Colborne Historical and Marine Museum curator Stephanie Powell-Baskick is gearing up for the Grand Old Christmas Festival, a new exhibit and the museum's fifth annual photo contest.

KAESHA FORAND  
InPort News Staff

**PORT COLBORNE** — With the Christmas season fast approaching, Port Colborne Historical and Marine Museum is shifting into high gear.

Museum curator Stephanie Powell-Baskick is preparing for the museum's yearly visit from Jolly Old St. Nick with the upcoming Grand Old Christmas Festival, a photo contest fundraiser and new exhibit. The museum grounds will be transformed in to a winter wonderland for the 34th annual Grand Old Christmas Festival, Sunday, Dec. 6, from noon to 4 p.m.

"It's a community tradition in Port Colborne. I have knowledge of families that were kids when they came and they get a branded log each year," she said.

Sections of wood are provided to visitors during a log sawing demonstration, then can be branded by a blacksmith. Santa will keep warm in the log school house where children can have their picture taken with him and volunteers will serve up hot pudding and sauce in Arabella's Tea Room. Once again, six elementary schools will have the opportunity to decorate a tree in the Christmas tree challenge. The winner will be chosen by ballot. "We've incorporated it to include youth," she said.

The aroma of fresh roasted chestnuts will fill the air and children can warm up with hot apple cider cooking in a big kettle.

See MUSEUM | Page 14

### EYE EXAMS

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■ **BUSINESS:** Initiatives underway to attract shoppers to the area

## Destination downtown



ALLAN BENNER  
InPort News Staff

PORT COLBORNE — The past few months have been exceptionally busy for Gayna Evans and Allan Benner.

The two business development co-ordinators working with South Niagara Community Futures Development Corp., funded through the federal government's job creation program, have focused their attention on developing programs designed to lure business to the city's downtown shops, including the areas along Main and Clarence Sts.

"We've been very busy since we started in September," Evans said.

One promotion they've dedicated a lot of time to will include retailers throughout the city.

They're running advertisements in *The Tribune* over a three-week period that will give people a chance to win tickets to a Toronto Maple Leafs game and \$200 in spending money.

The catch is, those ballots have to be dropped off at participating retailers in Port Colborne.

See BUSINESS | Page 15

ALLAN BENNER Staff Photo

Brendt Sabs and Gayna Evans, business development co-ordinators working with South Niagara Community Futures Development Corp., have organized several initiatives over the weeks and months ahead designed to get people shopping in Port Colborne's businesses, including an upcoming contest for Maple Leaf tickets.



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PHOTO: LISA

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## THE CLASSIFIEDS

small ads **BIG** deals

## RECIPE of the Week

Nov. 27th to Dec. 3rd

*Our Port Country Pantry's*

### INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 cup Granulated Sugar
- 1/2 cup Milk
- 1 cup All-purpose Flour
- 1 tsp. Baking Powder
- 1/2 tsp. Vanilla
- 1 cup Raisins
- Pinch of Sea Salt
- 2 1/4 cup Brown Sugar
- 2 cups Boiling Water
- 5 tbsp. Butter

### Sauce Cake

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Spray a 9 inch square pan with non-stick cooking spray. Combine ingredients & pour into pan. Set aside.
- Stir together until well blended. Pour against top of cake batter. Bake for approximately 30 minutes.

Makes one 9 inch square cake.  
\*Delicious served with ice cream or whipped cream.

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See: 1-4



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■ **MUSEUM:** Celebrating the Grand Old Christmas festival

Photo contest searches for city's best streetscape

FROM PAGE 10

Most activities are free, but carriage rides are \$1, candle dipping is \$2 and food can be purchased. Admission is free, however, donations will be accepted.

A new exhibit, Canadian Winter - Hibernator or Activate, which outlines the winter life of pioneers, will run until Dec. 20.

The fifth annual photo contest has the museum is searching for Port Colborne's best

streetscape. An 8x10 photo must be framed, matted and submitted with a \$10 entry fee for the first photo and \$5 for additional submissions. The photographer's name, phone number and photo title must be attached to the back.

The contest is a fundraiser for the L.R. Wilson Heritage Research Archive building. The deadline for submissions is Nov. 28 at 5 p.m. Information can be picked up at the museum.

The winning photo will be displayed in the research archive building. The photographer wins 500 4x6 prints at Boggio Pharmacy.

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## ■ BUSINESS

## BIA may be formed to help promote retail area

FROM PAGE 11

And that means more potential customers walking through the doors of the city's businesses.

Evans said the program fits in with the development agency's mandate of building the economy of the community.

"They're all about small business," Evans said. "We're all about building the community. Small business is the backbone, and without the success of small business your community suffers."

The program, Evans said, is designed to bring all of the business groups together — the Downtown Business Improvement Area, the Port Colborne Gateway Association and the chamber of commerce.

"This is the first opportunity that they're all coming together for a common goal of promoting local," Evans said.

She's anticipating that all Port Colborne-Wainfleet Chamber of Commerce member businesses will participate in the program.

"We're hoping for at least 40 businesses," Evans said.

"They're also hoping that people use the 30,000 ballots that will be printed in and distributed in the newspaper."

"Individuals that work in our community and they not shop in the community, that'll give them hopefully incentive to go check out Stamplicity for their shopping needs, or Serendipity," she said, referring to two downtown businesses.

The prizes were donated by Gary Talosi from local company, Dundee Wealth.

"It's given us the cash and the prize, and that was very generous," Evans said. "He doesn't benefit. The community benefits."

Although the Leafs are doing "horrible" so far this season, Sabs doesn't think the team's lackluster performances on the ice will diminish demand for the tickets for the Feb. 6 game.

"They sell out every time," he said.

In addition to helping local business attract customers, Evans said she and Sabs are assisting the Gateway Association efforts to establish a new business improvement area for Port Colborne.

The establishment of the BIA, she added, "is really significant for a community to show that they're building."

The city is planning to pitch in more than \$4 million to help pay for improvements to the Main St. area, outlined in the community improvement plan. The debentured expenditure and planned upgrades for the area will be the topic of a public meeting the city is holding Thursday from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. at city hall.

They've also been busy helping promote other big events sponsored by other groups, like the Come to the North event, planned for Dec. 4 at Lock 8 Park. Evans described it as a "free family event that the Gateway Association and Tim Horton's puts on" to help promote literacy in the community. It will feature treats and Christmas stories read by Mrs. Claus.

Meanwhile, they've also been involved in organizing a fundraising event with the Port Colborne Rotary Club and Port Colborne-Wainfleet Chamber of Commerce called the Spirit of Christmas at 7 p.m., Dec. 8. The event, held at the Port Colborne Rotary Club, will feature the Razorback providing live entertainment, along with raffles and games. All proceeds from the \$30 tickets will be donated to Port Cares and Santa's Helpers.

In the coming year, Evans said they will focus on creating a Get in a Get in Port Colborne shopping card that offer card holders deals at local merchants. Those cards will be sold by local non-profit groups as a fundraising initiative, and when shoppers use them in the community, they will also benefit the businesses, Evans said.

"That's our main 12-month goal," she said.

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■ **HEALTH:** Unique local program supports well-being of youth whose family circumstances force them to grow up before their time

## Young Carers recognized at health care expo

**KAESHA FORAND**  
InPort News Staff

PORT COLBORNE — An innovative program to help youngsters who help care for their families has received significant recognition from Ontario's health-care system.

The Powerhouse Project — Young Carers Initiative was one of three contenders in the meeting community needs through integrated care category during the Celebrating Innovations in Health Care Expo held at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre last Wednesday.

The event showcases some of the leading initiatives that support the health-care system. Each organization completed an application. Although only the top three finalists from each group received honourable mentions and a certificate, about 240 other organizations had the chance to exhibit their programs.

Young Carers went up against St. Michael's Hospital's infant passport program for young pregnant homeless women — which took top honours in the category — and against a Scarborough kidney health initiative.

Although Young Carers project manager Angela Arsenio and Haldimand-Norfolk program co-ordinator Debbie Oroz didn't walk away with the \$10,000 prize, Arsenio was "really thrilled to even be considered because the project is so new".

Young Carers is funded by the Local Health Integration Network to support the well-being of youth, under the age of 18, who help out at home because a family member needs assistance with everyday activities — such as cooking, cleaning, budgeting, household chores, parenting and emotional support.

"We are all really excited — we are a young agency but we've worked so hard. It's an exciting validation," Arsenio said. "It's really fantastic the LHIN took us on. We were really lucky."

The pilot project began in August 2008 and staff were hired in October. It's the first project of its kind in Canada. To date, 363 clients accessed services. Of those, 160 were children who were taught how to deal with stress, self care, leadership and cooking in addition to helping with homework and encouraging physical activity. A full list of services and contact information is available at [www.powerhouseproject.ca](http://www.powerhouseproject.ca).



Submitted Photo

Haldimand-Norfolk program co-ordinator Debbie Oroz and Powerhouse Project Young Carers project manager Angela Arsenio display a certificate they received during the Celebrating Innovations in Health Care Expo held at the Metro Toronto Convention Centre last Wednesday.

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■ PEOPLE, PLACES: Port Cares Fundraising Dinner and auction; O's by the Water Gallery; Canalside Pub and Eatery

# Port Cares lives up to its name



George Duma  
BY GEORGE

The Port Cares Fundraising Dinner and Auction is one of those dates many folks circle on their calendars. It's a fun evening dedicated to helping a quality organization whose goal is to help the less fortunate among us.

Calling it a win-win may be cliché but it's also accurate. And such was last Friday night in a jam-packed Italian Hall. With silent-auction prizes lining two side walls, live-auction prizes lining the front stage and the cashier's tables lining the back wall, this is by far one of the best-organized events of its kind in the Niagara region. And perhaps it should be. Friday's was the 11th annual so organizers have certainly had time to get it right and they've used that opportunity well.

There were 35 raffle items, more than 335 silent-auction items and more than 20 live-auction items with some really nice stuff up for grabs.

One of the top live-auction items that caught my eye appears year-in and year-out thanks to the generosity and kindness of the Oskams.

Lori and Gerald have a waterfront cottage just outside Bobcaygeon on Pigeon Lake. I lived in the Kawarthas for more than two years in Lindsay before moving to Niagara in the early 1980s and can attest to the fact it's one of the most beautiful areas in the entire country. And Bobcaygeon is a fantastic funky little town filled with quirky shops and fun pubs.

The cottage sleeps five to seven people and has all the comforts of home. Lori and Gerald always donate a week's stay there to the Port Cares auction.

This year's successful bidder will enjoy the area for seven days next summer for the unbelievable price of \$1,200. You figure three couples can be comfortable there for a week for \$400 a couple. It's a small price to pay for paradise and much, much less than the going rate for a week in the Kawarthas.

The Port Cares auction evening is always a good opportunity to catch up with friends we don't get to see often. A special thank you to the Port Cares board of directors, the auction committee and the staff who work there day to day. I often feel these folks don't get anywhere near the credit they deserve for what they do in this town.

\*\*\*

For anyone who has never been to O's by the Water Gallery at the corner of West and Clarence Sts., go. It's an amazing little jewel right in the heart of our downtown.

I must admit that before Saturday, I hadn't yet ventured there. It was always on the to-do list but it took this long to get there.

We went last Saturday afternoon after reading *Tribune* reporter Allan Benner's excellent story in that morning's paper about Kathleen Thorsen. The Vancouver native is a survivor of an extremely serious type of ovarian cancer. By the time doctors made their diagnosis in September, 2008, the cancer was already at Stage 3.

See BY GEORGE | Page 18



GEORGE DUMA inPort News Photos

Cheryl Bull, left, and Lori Oskam enjoy the evening together at the Port Cares Fundraising Dinner and Auction last Friday. Lori and her husband Gerald donated a week-long stay at their Bobcaygeon cottage next summer to the live auction portion of the evening.



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■ BY GREGG

# Artistic talent on display at O's by the Water Gallery

FROM PAGE 17

According to Allan's story, as she recovered from the surgery and chemo that followed, she painted. And painted. And painted some more.

Kathleen's work is stunning and it will be on display at O's by the Water for a month. Drop in for a chat with O's owner Peggy O'Hara and check out the paintings. They're reasonably priced and you just might find the perfect Christmas gift among Kathleen's art. She will donate a portion of her sales to the Juravinski

Cancer Centre in Hamilton, the same organization she credits for saving her life.

A special treat to the afternoon was the joy of walking in and finding young Darcy Feagan playing her acoustic guitar and singing soft folk tunes for the packed room that was admiring the 30-plus paintings. Darcy has long been one of my very favourite young people in our fair city. But before Saturday, I had no idea how talented a musician and singer she is.

\*\*\*

Rosemary and Gregg Poisson are getting

into the United Way spirit. The co-owners of the Canalside Pub and Eatery will donate 10% from all Wednesday sales — food and alcohol — to the social agency for the next month.

"We've seen other businesses are participating in various United Way activities and we wanted to do our share," Greg says. He's also hoping other businesses might be spurred into action.

The pub and eatery is located on West St.

\*\*\*

That's it for this week, folks. May you have a terrific weekend. See you next Friday.

George Duma is a resident of Port Colborne and has spent 30 years in the newspaper business. He is currently a member of the journalism faculty at Niagara College. He welcomes comments and column suggestions and can be reached at gduma@cogeco.ca.



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## localbrief

## NEW BIKE LANES ON FEEDER RD.

**WAINFLEET** — Cyclists venturing through the township can now do so with ease on Feeder Rd. Lanes are painted and signs will be installed shortly for 3.3 km of bicycle lanes through the middle of Feeder Rd.

Director of operations for the township, Fred Wiseman is proud of the new lanes that were installed in conjunction with the road's reconstruction with hot mix asphalt. It was funded with \$500,000 in infrastructure dollars and \$250,000 from township.

"The bike lanes are an important recreational offering to residents of the township."

The township has applied for funding from the region, which helps fund construction of bicycle lanes on roads identified in the Niagara Bioscience Master Plan.

Although most residents are pleased with the bicycle lanes, Wiseman has come under criticism because the lanes don't extend the entire length of the road. He said he would eventually like to extend the bike lanes to Forks Rd. to Hwy. 3, however, doing so would require significant work to large ditches, a drain and nearby properties.

Infrastructure work is underway on the Bullock Rd. bridge, which will open a new engineering challenge for Niagara. The bridge is being created in push and pull in which it will build the bridge, but it can't be trucked and put in place. That is unheard of in construction," Wiseman said.

"The downtime is 10 working days. They will demolish the old bridge and set the new one down with a crane." Fireproof has been selected as the contractor to build the bridge, which will span a new engineering challenge for Niagara. The bridge is being created in push and pull in which it will build the bridge, but it can't be trucked and put in place. That is unheard of in construction," Wiseman said.

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—Kaesha Forand, *InPort News Staff*

■ **PROJECT:** About 1,000 historic items to be documented

## Niagara's War of 1812 past goes digital

KAESHA FORAND  
InPort News Staff

**PORT COLBORNE** — The work is painstakingly detailed.

Photographing every fragile page of a ledger which contains thousands of pieces of financial information dating from 1802 to 1814.

Scanning important archival documents, land grants, topographical military uniforms, buttons and any item related to the War of 1812 era. Every object tells a story, one that will shed more light on Niagara's role in the War of 1812.

Port Colborne Historical and Marine Museum started a Brock University digitization team to help document items related to the War of 1812 for the upcoming bicentennial anniversary.

Port Colborne resident Sarah Maloney and Michelle Nicholls spent three weeks at the museum, photographing cannon balls, war claim forms, firearms, buttons and other artifacts to be posted on www.ourontarioback.com by March 10 through the university's Buffalo website. The information will also be implemented in District School Board of Niagara curriculum.

Maloney and Nicholls are making the rounds to Niagara museums which have items related to the war.

"It's also for researchers to promote



KAESHA FORAND Staff Photo

Brock University digitization assistant Sarah Maloney photographs the Macklem ledger — which contained vital information from 1809 to 1816 — with Port Colborne Historical and Marine Museum heritage research technician Glenn Walker and digitization assistant Michelle Nicholls last week.

writing so they have access to information," Maloney said. "Niagara is quite rich in the 1812 era."

Heritage research technician Glenn Walker is pleased to share the items with the public including one gem in the museum's collection — a certificate exempting war veterans which was found after combing through thousands of artifacts.

The Zavitz mill, near Sugarloaf Hill,

was a vital asset to Port Colborne during the war. Cabins along the lakeshore were looted and cannon balls were hidden in barrels of flour. Many of those cannon balls were later found around the Gravelly Bay shoreline.

The digitization project was funded in part with a \$55,000 grant from the Department of Canadian Heritage through the Canadian Historical Online Strategy. It will cost about \$100,000. Partners in the project include the Department of Canadian Heritage, Brock University, the Niagara Historical Society and Museum, Niagara Falls Museums Association, the Lundy's Lake Historical Museum and Grimsby and Jordan museums.

Maloney expects they will document nearly 1,000 items. Between 30 and 50 military and domestic items came from the Port Colborne museum where they wrap up their work this week. The next step is to post the path to digitization is Grimsby and Jordan.

"It's very labour intensive but will be great once everything is available," Nicholls said.

Maloney said the archiving not only creates access to Niagara's rich history, it also makes them more accessible to the public.

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